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**PERSONAL
EXPERIENCE
MONOGRAPH**

**VII CORPS MAIN COMMAND POSTS
DURING OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD
AND DESERT STORM**

BY

COLONEL PAUL E. CHRISTOPHER
United States Army



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VII CORPS MAIN COMMAND POSTS DURING OPERATIONS DESERT SHIELD AND DESERT STORM

A PERSONAL EXPERIENCE MONOGRAPH

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During the conduct of Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, VII Corps operated with several different configurations of its Main Command Post. As the situation dictated, changes were made to get the most out of the organization, functions, and, to a great extent, its personnel. I will attempt to capture these changes in a chronological sequence, add my personal experiences and frustrations, and state my opinions of how the changes either added to or subtracted from the successes of VII Corps.

My personal experience monograph begins in late August, 1990 at the Headquarters of VII Corps in Stuttgart, Germany. After relinquishing command of my battalion, and after a thirty-day CONUS leave, I was to become the chief of the Fire Support Element (FSE) at the Headquarters of VII Corps located at Kelley Barracks. After my leave, I began to hear rumors that I was being reassigned to the Corps ACoS, G-3 to act as the Chief of Operations. My boss at the time, COL Ray Smith, the Assistant Fire Support Coordinator (AFSCORD), knew nothing of my reassignment and assured me that my job with the FSE was secure. Not long after that, I was formally told that I would take on the job of Chief of Operations for VII Corps.

By late August, the VII Corps had established the first of many Command Posts/Operations Centers in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. Known as the VII Corps Crisis Action Team or CAT, it was established in a basement conference room at Kelley Barracks soon after Saddam Hussein's campaign to consume Kuwait, and just about the same week as I took charge of the operations job. It was a completely secure area adjacent to the VII Corps

Emergency Action Center and the message center. The mission of the CAT was to receive taskings from USAREUR to support CINCCENTCOM, decide which major subordinate command was most capable of providing the requested support, brief the current CENTCOM, USAREUR, and VII Corps daily situation, deal with force protection issues arising from terrorists activities and the German popular campaign of "no blood for oil," and in general, be the single point of contact for all Desert Shield issues that might affect VII Corps.

During September and October, the CAT was staffed by members of the ACoS, G-3 Operations Division and the ACoS, G-4 Operations Division on a twenty-four hour basis. The remainder of the staff operated with an on-call officer capable of returning to the CAT within fifteen minutes. Typical missions were monitoring deployment of CENTCOM units--several of which transited the VII Corps area; identifying and locating requested equipment--especially radios, specialized ammunition such as the TOW-2, and aircraft repair parts. One of my primary jobs during this time was to brief these requests to the VII Corps Chief of Staff, BG John Landry--a fiery, shoot-the-messenger, double Type-A kind of man. I soon found out the best way of doing this was to be waiting for him in his office early each morning and get on his calendar each evening before he left work. The last thing I wanted was for him to show up at the CAT for a briefing. The slightest error in detail or misplaced piece of paper would set him off. The pressure was unbelievable.

Fifteen to eighteen-hour days were the norm during this period. It soon became evident that my three assigned officers and I were being worn to a frazzle. After a few tries, I finally got the G-3, COL Stanley Cherrie, to agree that personnel from the Plans, Training, and Exercise Divisions could be used to help staff the CAT. This allowed me and my crew to continue our day-to-day peacetime missions such as USR, border operations, and taskings.

I will long remember the evening of 9 November, 1990. I had been on duty for the past twenty-four hours and was ready for a well-deserved rest. We had been told that President Bush would be on the local Armed Forces Television Network (AFRTS) with an important message regarding Operation Desert Shield beginning at 2100 hours. Even though rumors of VII Corps deployment to Saudi Arabia had been rampant over the past few weeks, I had decided that they were, in fact, rumors, and that VII Corps would never be deployed anywhere except stateside and then only after the command was inactivated. With these comforting thoughts coupled with an hour delay in the President's televised speech, I decided that I was too tired to stay up any longer. Sometime around midnight on the evening of 9 November, I was awakened by a telephone call stating that VII Corps was to begin deployment to Operation Desert Shield at the earliest possible date. That telephone call initiated the second command post/operation center to be utilized by VII Corps. By the time the primary staff had arrived for duty on the morning of 10 November, plans were

underway on how to reconfigure the CAT into a true operations center (see diagram 1).

Personnel were my first priority. It was physically impossible for the four officers (including myself) assigned to the Operations Division to man both the CAT and the Emergency Operations Center on a sustained basis. The deactivation of the Training Aids Support Office (TASO) and the Exercise Divisions within the G-3 provided an additional two officers and six enlisted personnel for my Operations Division. The other staff sections provided a twenty-four hour capability from their assets.

With the influx of enough personnel to adequately man the CAT, communications became the "long pole in the tent." Simply stated, there was a shortage of everything from STU-III secure telephones and compatible FAX machines to the number of telephone lines routed into the headquarters building. Additionally, the only way to reach CENTCOM was through the already overworked AUTOVON system. Communications were entirely inadequate to begin deployment planning for the VII Corps. Adding to my frustration was the fact that only the ACoS, G-3 was authorized to release hard-copy messages through the VII Corps message center. In order to solve this myriad of communications problems, I physically took a G-6 representative from office to office within the headquarters building and "stole" telephone lines and any STU-III telephone that wasn't critical to the functioning of that particular office. FAX machines were likewise requisitioned.

Although I had no authority to do so, I had a requirement for communication assets. There was more than one full colonel that I went "head to head" with over the requisition procedures. I was using, but thankfully the Chief of Staff ruled in my favor. I am not totally sure if the Chief of Staff or the G-3 ever knew of my next move. As previously stated, only the G-3, COL Cherrie, could release hard-copy message traffic from VII Corps on any operational matter. During this critical deployment period and the actual planning of VII Corps operations in Saudi Arabia, COL Cherrie was either in a meeting or headed to his next meeting. I felt that I could simply not afford to let the message traffic build up in his in box awaiting signature. I directed my deputy to prepare a signature card for the authority to release messages. I signed both the releaser signature block and the authority block. Much to my surprise, the message center accepted the card and I began to release messages for VII Corps. At the same time, I announced to all action officers in the CAT that only the G-3 Operations would release any message that was sent from VII Corps. In Addition, all messages received at VII Corps went through the G-3 Operations Division for logging and assigning to action officers. Right or wrong, the system worked. I learned early on that I had better know what was going on in all of the staff sections and had better keep up with all actions affecting VII Corps and Operation Desert Shield.

FAX machines were a headache. We finally ended up with four machines in the CAT. We communicated with CENTCOM on one,

USAREUR on another, and our major subordinate commands (MSC) on the other two. Compatibility of systems was the major problem. Each level of command had different brands--from the Army's tactical FAX and Japanese models to American commercial machines--which made this method of communication difficult at best.

Communications with CENTCOM finally became easier once we obtained a satellite dish and dedicated lines; however, a lack of telephone directories, atmospheric static, and exactly what office did what to whom in Saudi Arabia continued to cause problems. We found that the best time to talk and send FAX messages was around 0400 hours daily.

As early November became late November, the primary purpose of the CAT became validating shortages of personnel and equipment, and requesting that USAREUR fill these shortages for our MCSs. Unit Status Reports were carefully checked for shortages of major end items and the appropriate requisitions were forwarded to the USAREUR CAT for resolution. Also during this period, the MSCs began to ask for new items of equipment and plus-ups to their TO&Es. Such items as Global Positioning Systems, additional water-carrying vehicles, tents, desert BDUs, etc., were requested. As time passed, our MSCs would send message after message stating their shortages. I can remember one division saying that it was short many weapons including machine guns, personal weapons, and even mortars. Protective masks were short throughout the corps, as well as chemical

overgarments, alarms, and radiac meters. I could not believe that a forward-deployed corps could have so many shortages and still be prepared to fight at a moments notice.

It also appeared that there was no quality control at the division level on what shortages actually needed filling. Such things as band instruments, cold weather gear and the like were contained in their requests. I knew that if CINCUSAREUR saw that we were requesting band instruments, it wouldn't be long before we were merely "blown off." I directed the G-4 representative in the CAT to do a line-by-line validation of the requests prior to dispatch to USAREUR. This took valuable time, but I felt it was necessary. At the same time, MSC commanders began the "wouldn't it be nice if we had a" routine. For example, one aviation unit wanted a small six-wheeled, all-terrain vehicle for each helicopter in order to haul parts and equipment to and from maintenance bays and aircraft parking areas. He was quite upset when I disapproved his request stating that he would take the matter up with the Corps Commander. I never heard anything else after that.

One of the major problems that I had during this time was that I could not get any information concerning the plan for the period once VII Corps arrived in the CENTCOM AOR. About the only thing I knew was that VII Corps would deploy out of the major European ports (both sea and air) and into Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. Only the Command Group, primary staff (O-6 level), and selected personnel personally briefed into the program by the

Chief of Staff were knowledgeable of the scheme of maneuver. I basically knew that the CG wanted COSCOM and the 2nd ACR to deploy first. Basis of Issue Plans (BOIP) on key items of equipment such as GPS, water vehicles, and DBDUs were all developed on a "gut feel." Try as I might, I could not get any information on exactly where we would go or what we would do after we cleared the port. During this entire time, I never received any sort of guidance from the ACoS, G-3. I seldom saw him more than 10-20 minutes a day.

As we got closer to the actual deployment of VII Corps, it became evident that the CAT simply could not handle the volume of deployment actions. A shortage of trained World Wide Movement System Computer operators severely hampered our efforts. We finally had to "borrow" operators from EUCOM Headquarters, the Air Force, and USAREUR. We installed a total of six terminals in the EOC in order to input our movement data. This quickly overloaded the system and caused us to lose valuable time. We finally sent an operator across town to EUCOM and used their terminal. I don't believe that VII Corps had ever updated any movement data in the world-wide system. At the same time USAREUR sent help from DCSOPS which formed the nucleus of a Deployment Action Team (DAT). This team would monitor convoys, ships, and airplanes and would issue the call forward order to the various units as movement assets became available. The DAT relieved much of the pressure from the CAT and allowed us to focus on unit requirements.

The value of liaison was a lesson quickly learned while setting up and operating the CAT. I'm not sure at this point whether it was my idea or the idea of one of my action officers but it was decided early on that liaison teams were needed from each MSC. Since the CAT was already quite full of action officers, I made a place for them in a long hallway adjacent to the CAT. They proved to be a valuable asset for information, status reporting, and problems at unit level. They were free to move between the CAT and the DAT. Overhead slides were developed so that they could provide accurate status reports to the Commanding General and Chief of Staff at daily briefings. These VGTs detailed the status of personnel, equipment, and unresolved problem areas submitted to the corps staff for resolution.

By early December, most of the "bugs" had been worked out and a routine of sorts had developed. Units had started the deployment process to the ports in Europe. I could now, between crises, devote some of my time to what the VII Corps Main would look like once deployed to Saudi Arabia. I started this process with very little knowledge of what the main looked like while deployed since I was relatively new to the job and had never undergone an exercise with the corps. As far back as anyone could remember, VII Corps would either operate from a permanently constructed ramp at Kelley Barracks, a rented warehouse on the local German economy, or a somewhat skeleton vehicle fleet deployed in a field environment for short periods of time. With the help of the Deputy G-3, we obtained new (used) expandable

vans, generators, map boards, etc. By the time our equipment had deployed to the port of embarkation, we had completely refurbished the high-visibility vans with carpeting, new paint and new accessories. At this point in time, it really didn't matter to us that red crosses were painted on the sides of the vans--evidence of where they were obtained. We also obtained M577 command tracks for use as the TAC CP, and M113 vehicles for the CG and G-3. These were refurbished also.

The next step in the process of forming a Corps Main was to determine exactly what information was needed by the Command Group on a recurring basis. We decided on pie-charts and bar graphs that would be attached to the wing boards on either side of the main operations map board. Each staff section (coordinating and special) developed charts that reflected information they felt the Command Group needed to know on a routine basis. These were fabricated by what was left of TASO, placed in a three ring binder and submitted through the G-3, Chief of Staff, and Deputy Commanding General to the Commanding General for approval. We finally got approval on our proposal just a few days prior to departure.

One of my most vivid memories during the period just prior to departure was the number of new personnel being assigned to the corps staff. Most noteworthy were the assignment of a new G-2, G-5, several new deputies, and a new chief of the TAC CP. It was common to have to ask who someone was when they showed up at the CAT for an update. The thought of "fight the way you

train" crossed my mind several times during this influx of personnel. Fort Leavenworth sent a team of BCTP personnel that provided valuable advice on how to incorporate, organize, and train the new personnel.

The next command post/operations center used by VII Corps was what was referred to as the Mini-Main. On 13 December 1990, I, along with my operations staff, minus two officers and several NCOs who were left to close out the CAT, arrived in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. After waiting several hours at the airport for transportation and then several more hours awaiting tent space at a place called "Hotel California," I finally found the Special Troops Battalion (STB) Commander to find out exactly where the Mini-Main would be set up. To my surprise, it was to be located approximately one and one-half miles away in a large dirt parking lot that contained what amounted to several pre-fabricated buildings. These buildings were about the size of a small house trailer. I was initially assigned three of these structures. All were completely void of furniture, communication assets, and maps.

My first order of business was to get the buildings organized. I needed furniture, office supplies, maps, communications, and in short, everything. We had deployed with several lap-top computers, files, journals, etc., but this equipment was somewhere in a large equipment holding yard at the airfield. I finally found the VII Corps "scrounger" and told him not to come back until he had located our pallet of equipment. I

also had no transportation. I was required to walk or hitch a ride back to the Hotel California to rustle up the rest of my people and arrange for supplies and equipment with which to set up the Mini-Main. On my long walk back, I noted that every Specialist in theater was driving a vehicle of some sort--from Toyota Landcruisers, Jeep Wagoneers and the like to tactical vehicles. On each of my walking tours between the Mini-Main and Hotel California that day, I would ask for transportation assets only to be told that nothing was available. We were forced to either hitch-hike or walk with whatever equipment we could find. Absolutely nothing was getting accomplished as far as set-up of the Mini-Main was concerned.

I might add here that Hotel California--which was a converted recreation center and didn't even resemble a hotel--contained not only the sleeping area for our headquarters, but also was the command and control or Port Support Activity (PSA) from the IID(F). A battalion of the IID(F) had been deployed several weeks prior with the mission of receiving units and equipment into theater and providing life support functions until the units were ready for onward movement. From the Mini-Main point of view, it would be critical that the operations division know the status of each and every deployment since our mission would be to track the building of combat power and the onward movement of the corps into their respective Tactical Assembly Areas (TAAs). Our other major task was the development of the VII Corps Commander's Daily Situation Report to ARCENT,

CENTCOM, and USAREUR. It would be almost impossible to accomplish these tasks without transportation, communications, or furniture. It would have been much easier if the Mini-Main and the Port Support Activity could have been collocated.

Late in the afternoon of 13 December, after one of my many walking trips to and from the Mini-Main and Hotel California, I ran into a fuming Chief of Staff at the Mini-Main. Why wasn't I operational, etc.? It seemed like I was standing at attention for quite some time! I finally got a chance to show him my plan for setting up the Mini-Main. One of the buildings would become a conference room, one would become the G-2/G-3 Operations Center, and the third would become dedicated to the FSE, G-4, Engineer, and G-1. He approved my plan and finally asked what help I needed. I always knew that a General could get things done. Within the next two hours, I was assigned a Chevrolet Suburban, telephones, maps, office supplies, and furniture--even a coffee pot. The VII Corps "scrounger" even found our pallet of equipment. By 2400 hours, 13 December, the Mini-Main was finally operational (see diagram 2).

As previously mentioned, the mission of the Mini-Main was to track the corps MSCs into their TAAs, to determine the amount of combat power (measured in battalion equivalents capable of fighting) and produce the dreaded daily situation report. In addition, we were tasked to produce a daily plan detailing "what if we had to fight today" in case Saddam Hussein decided to attack Saudi Arabia during the build-up period. This proved to

be quite difficult since exact locations of TAAs, strengths and timetables for onward movement were "iffy" at best. The VII Corps plan still had not been disseminated to the staff. All I knew of the tactical situation was that elements of the 2d COSCOM were establishing LOG BASE ALFA along Tap Line Road and that the 2d ACR was setting up positions to the north of the Log Base. Here again, Basis of Issue Plans were developed using this small bit of information.

The Corps Commander's Daily Situation Report also proved to be a difficult task. Information for the report was obtained through a variety of sources. First, liaison officers with duty at the PSA provided us with a somewhat accurate picture of the status of their particular MSC. Secondly, the VII Corps staff provided input from their respective area, and thirdly, the Chief of Staff and Commanding General provided personal entries. The situation report, during this period, consisted of critical equipment shortages, shortages of adequate transportation assets, ammunition status, personnel daily summaries, and a section on the Commander's biggest concerns. Before we were through, the document was approaching 50 typewritten pages! The Commanding General, or in his absence, the Chief of Staff, personally approved the release of this daily report.

Convoy tracking was also a problem due to a lack of long distance radio equipment. We had yet to receive our allocation of tactical satellite radios, our RATT equipment was still afloat, and our area communications centers for the TASS system

had not yet been established north of the port. We finally dispatched a portion of the TAC CP to one of the rest/refuel centers along Tap Line Road. Using a borrowed tactical telephone, we could normally get a twice-daily report detailing what units had passed the rest/refuel area and into their TAA.

I felt sorry for COL Cherrie during our stay at the Mini-Main. As previously mentioned, one of the buildings was set aside for a conference room. The primary staff, G-3 Plans and the few officers who knew of the future plans for the corps were in a constant meeting from about 0800 hours to 2200 hours daily. I finally gave up trying to attend the meetings after being told to leave by the Chief of Staff. COL Cherrie, during the course of these meetings, would receive many taskers from LTG Franks and BG Landry. These, he would have to personally work after these meetings finally broke for the evening. I wanted so badly to help him with the taskers, but wasn't allowed due to the fact that he would have to tell me parts of the plan. Even though we had developed shifts (day and night) for the Mini-Main, I would normally stay until the G-3 left for the evening. During our stay at the Mini-Main, "normal" hours for me was from 0500 hours to 0100 hours the next morning. I had no back up since the Deputy G-3 was yet to arrive in theater. COL Cherrie worked approximately the same hours although I tried to get there in sufficient time before he so that I could give him an update prior to the start of his meetings. I took every opportunity to make sure he wasn't disturbed during the couple of hours daily he

wasn't in some meeting.

Towards the latter part of December, the vehicles and equipment for the Corps Main finally arrived in port and planning started for our move to the TAA. I arranged a meeting with the Chief of Staff and the Special Troops Battalion Commander in order to select a site for the Corps Main. We decided that the best place for the main would be just southwest of Log Base Alfa and that the STB Commander, a communications representative, an engineer representative and I would do a reconnaissance of the site the following day. A Blackhawk helicopter from the XVIII Corps was used for the reconnaissance. This was probably the longest flight on a helicopter I had ever had--lasting some seven hours for the round trip! Upon my return, I was about to tell the Chief of Staff that a suitable site had been selected in the general area agreed upon during the map reconnaissance when COL Cherrie told me that plans had changed and the new site for the main would be a lot farther to the west (just southeast of Hafir al Batin). Due to weather, all helicopter flights were cancelled and it was decided that the STB Commander would go to the new area by vehicle--several, in fact, because representatives of the different staff sections would also participate in the recon.

The day after Christmas, the VII Corps Main departed for our first field location. I departed leaving approximately one-half of my Operations Division at the Mini-Main in order to keep it operational. I was to go with the advanced party to make sure the ramp was set up properly. The Deputy G-3, who had arrived in

theater the week before, would bring the main body forward the following day. After a hard day's drive, we finally arrived in our TAA at approximately 1800 hours--just enough time to pitch a tent before darkness. It was a strange feeling being miles from nowhere with only a few personnel (about 15) around for security. What made matters worse was the fact that only a few of these individuals had any ammunition at all since our ammunition was yet to arrive in theater! I personally had only seven rounds of .45 caliber ammunition. Guards that night had to switch magazines as they went on duty.

After a restless night, morning finally arrived and we began the work of laying out the main's location. Bulldozers from the 7th Engineers would arrive later in the day to start building the berms that would surround the main and most of the STB base camp. We expected the main body to begin arriving late in the afternoon. The ramp, consisting of 40-50 metal frames approximately four by four feet with plywood covering, went together fairly easy. Our expandable vans would be backed into this ramp on each side. The ramp, once completed, stretched approximately 75 yards across the desert floor. The Intelligence portion of the main and Corps Artillery had their own ramps and would be added upon their arrival. In all, the ramp would be over 100 yards long upon full completion.

The main body, with the Deputy G-3 in the lead, finally arrived after a three-day tour of the desert. They had been "misoriented" several times and had kept driving around trying to

find us. With no communication assets, other than a PRC-77 with a whip antennae, with which to help locate them, I dispatched search parties--one to the north towards Tap Line Road and one to the west towards KKMC. Towards the end of the third day, they were located some ten miles south of our location. Their heavy vehicles were mired in the sand and only some ingenuity on their part got them out of the loose sand.

On the fourth day (five for me and my crew) the fourth iteration of the VII Corps Main started to take shape. Corps Artillery, the Intelligence Center and the 8th ASOC (Air Force) also began to arrive. By the end of the day, vehicles were in place on the ramp, camouflage was being erected, and phone lines were being installed. The life support areas and Military Police security operations were also beginning to take shape. When completed, the Corps Main would be one of the largest tactical field sites I had ever encountered. Diagram 3 shows how the area was established and diagram 4 shows the layout of the ramp area.

By the end of the fifth day, the VII Corps Main was operational. The operations center consisted of two expandable vans. The first of these, we called the "Four Horsemen" van--named because of the twenty-four hour staffing requirement. Representatives included the G-3 Ops, G-2 Ops, G-4 Ops and a Fire Support Element representative. This is where the Chief of Staff held his updates, meetings, and where taskers were developed to his staff. The other van was where my G-3 operations staff accomplished the routine tasks of keeping up with the corps.

Since planning was still being done on the "plan", the Chief of Staff, G-3, and the Commanding General spent a lot of time in the G-3 Plans complex. There were several frustrations for me during this time. First, too many people were trying to enter the Four Horse van. When more than the primary staff were present, no one could get much accomplished. Second, anytime there was a briefing or meeting in the van, anyone walking down the ramp made too much noise. I was required to place an NCO on each side of the G-3 operations complex to stop foot traffic on the ramp while the meeting was in progress.

It soon became apparent that communications were a major problem. By this time, most of our area signal centers had been established; however, units would, for some unknown reason, change telephone numbers on a daily basis. Even with a crude telephone directory, most of the time we had to wait for an MSC to call us in order to get a good number for their operations center. It was almost impossible for us to reach the PSA at Hotel California. We had to go through several signal nodes and would get disconnected several times before getting the call to its destination. Additionally, hard-copy messages were almost impossible to send and receive. Some of the MSC's equipment was yet to arrive, some had bits and pieces of their systems, and equipment malfunctions were common. Everyone, to include the Signal Brigade Commander, was called in to solve the problem. In order to get a message out of the VII Corps Main, my action officers were required to call, FAX, type hard-copy messages, and

make sure the Liaison Officers knew of the message so they could try and contact their respective MSC. It was unbelievable that the corps could not adequately communicate with its MSCs. We did have a FAX capability with ARCENT and a few of our MSCs, but this was slow and required several re-sends due to blowing sand interfering with the proper operation of the machine, poor quality of the material being sent, and atmospheric conditions. We also had established an E-mail system which proved effective after a few work-arounds. The first was an investigation to determine the security of the system. The G-6 assured us that the system would handle up to secret material. Additionally, the E-mail system used long, complicated message addresses. It took an inordinate amount of time and required very accurate typing and proofing in order to get an E-mail message out. It also required the computer operator time to look up and determine the exact addressee to which the message was to be sent. Enough was enough! I told the G-6 that I wanted a computer terminal in each MSC operation center, a simple address, such as "Jayhawk Main" for us, " Danger Main" for the IID, etc., and priority lines for the sole purpose of utilizing E-mail. We used this system throughout Desert Shield and Desert Storm with success. I also got the Chief of Staff to agree that only the G-3 Operations could dispatch any message from the corps main. Discipline was badly needed in all existing communication systems. The only telephones that could be used in either the priority or flash mode were located in the operations center. Of course,

telephones in the Commanding General's complex and the Chief of Staff's office were also capable of priority and flash traffic. Since almost any telephone within the TASS system could, with the correct number, get into the AUTOVON system, contact a German operator, and be connected to one's home telephone number, just getting through to a tactical unit became a problem. Since either all or none of the telephones could be used in this manner, I did get the Chief of Staff to release a message that stated that only official calls would be made back to Germany. I'm not sure if this helped or not since one constantly got a busy signal on every number dialed--even at 0200 hours!

Several major tasks were given to the operations center during the period before the air war began. One was to track the build up of combat power within the TAAs. This task was extremely difficult to accomplish even though I had assigned one officer on each shift the mission of staying in contact with each MSC G-3/S-3 to find out what had arrived at the port, what was in transit, and what had arrived in the TAA--especially tanks, Bradleys and artillery systems. We used these numbers in conjunction with our second task, the "what if we had to fight today" plan. This FRAGPLAN was developed each night with the help of the G-3 Plans Division and briefed to LTG Franks the following morning. We tried to spell out in detail the task organization, scheme of maneuver, and the commander's intent. Initially, the 2ACR was to block any attempt of an armed force to attack Log Base Alfa. As combat power was generated through the

arrival of additional heavy forces, plans to conduct limited counterattacks in the Wadi al Batin were developed. We received the attachment of the 1CD, the French Division and the 1st (UK) Armored Division to help repel any spoiling attack into our area.

Training of our forces also took on a new meaning. Although our units had undergone extensive tank gunnery before we left Germany, we wanted to continue the extensive training. Each division, plus the ACR and the VII Corps Main, developed live-fire ranges within or adjacent to their respective TAA for this purpose. It soon became apparent that someone had to control the use of these valuable assets. All of the associated actions required of operating a live-fire range, such as airspace and host nation coordination, safety of the local sheep and camel herders, scheduling of units to fire, and keeping track of what was being fired where, had to be accomplished. Since there is no Training Division within the G-3 in time of war, several different organizations within the corps were tasked with this responsibility. The corps TAC (Training Division before Desert Shield) was initially given the mission but could not keep up due to the many training exercises, movements, and other command and control and war-fighting operations going on at the time. By this time a VII Corps LNO section to the Saudi military and coalition forces was operating out of KKMC. This LNO team did an excellent job in controlling the ranges since they were collocated with the Saudi military, local civilian leaders, and the coalition forces. This success was short-lived, however, due

to the eastward movement of the coalition forces and the subsequent displacement of the LNO team. Finally, my operations section at the Corps Main assumed the responsibility of scheduling and tracking the ranges. As previously noted, not all VII Corps ammunition had arrived in theater. The corps commander was rightfully concerned that if controls were not placed on subordinate units, too much of the preferred ammunition, full service rounds, would be used up in training. Firing ammunition such as TOW-2, 120mm tank ammunition, rockets for attack helicopters, Copperhead artillery rounds, and MLRS rockets was personally approved by LTG Franks through the operations center during this critical period. Requests from the MSCs were consolidated and briefed to him at the morning briefing each day.

The daily situation report also continued during this period. Large sections were devoted exclusively to the lack of Heavy Equipment Transports (HETs) with which to move our equipment from the ports to the TAAs, ammunition status, lack of GPS, long-range communication assets, and water/fuel hauling equipment, and a request that the corps be issued desert BDUs. This 20-40 page document was the responsibility of two officers within my operations division. LTG Franks continued to personally review this document before dispatch to ARCENT.

One of my major tasks during this period was to be in charge of the main complex--a kind of Headquarters Commandant. I was responsible for everything inside the dirt berm that enclosed the

main. This included police of the area, camouflage, security and general appearance. Perimeter security quickly became a problem. Staff sections, to include my own, were required to man fighting positions around the berm--especially on the side facing away from the life support areas of STB. My portion of the berm included three fighting positions which were to be manned twenty-four hours a day. This took a minimum of six soldiers (mostly senior NCOs) away from their primary duties of keeping maps posted, operating communications systems and other administrative and tactical duties. In addition, the Commanding General established a corps-wide, 100 percent stand-to each morning in which all positions would be fully manned. For us this meant not only the positions within the main berm had to be manned, but also all the fighting positions within the life support area of STB. After only a few hours rest, off-duty personnel were routed from their tents and placed in fighting positions dug within the berm or near their tent. This stand-to, in addition to time devoted to eating, police call, KP, guard duty, personal hygiene (washing clothes, taking cold showers, etc.), and the famous "crap-burning details" left very little time for adequate rest. The weather also added to our miseries. The rainy season began in early January and temperatures plummeted to below freezing each night. Our resistance finally gave way and many came down with colds, flu and pneumonia-type symptoms. I tried several times to get permission to use the VII Corps band (84th Army Band) as the security force for the main.

All I could see them doing was providing concerts several times a week in the life support area during meal hours. Try as I might, I could not get the band for use as the security element.

Once it became certain that offensive action on the part of the coalition would occur, the Corps Commander made the decision to brief the remainder (the vast majority) of the staff on the plan of action. Although I don't remember the exact date of this briefing, the general time frame was about two weeks before the air war started. The briefing occurred in a GP large tent which we had erected in an area directly behind the operations van. I remember the tent being packed with personnel trying to find out what was going on. Over the next several days, there were conferences galore designed to put the finishing touches on the plan. My specific tasks were to train my crew for wartime operations, and try to determine what should be done to get the corps into its attack position. The Corps Commander also decided that reconnaissance into the western sector would be kept to a minimum. Only he could approve any movement to the west of KKMC--to include commander recons. This was done in order to help deceive Iraqi defenders on the location of the main attack. The COSCOM Commanders were quite upset about this decision since they were tasked with the responsibility of establishing LOG BASE ECHO.

During our planning phase, the BCTP team once again joined us to help go through the plan, to wargame it, and to help staff sections get organized. This was invaluable help to all. I was

extremely pleased when I was assigned two of the majors from the team to work permanently with us. The head of the team, COL Hawk, would be BG Landry's stand-in in order to provide a twenty-four hour capability in the operations center. Also during this period, several Lieutenant Colonels joined the VII Corps Main's staff. Two were assigned to the operations center--one to do shift work with me and the other to be a "Main Commandant." There was no way that I could work 12 to 16-hour shifts and still have time to make sure the entire area was presentable. This arrangement also allowed the Deputy G-3 to work full-time on BOIPs, anti-fratricide measures, and attend various operational meetings at KKMC.

This pre-war phase offers two good lessons-learned. First, all personnel, even leaders, must have sufficient time available for personal hygiene, sleep, and cleaning chores--especially in a desert environment. Just these tasks took approximately two hours a day--longer if it happened to be wash day! Developing the best time to do shift changes became a big issue primarily due to the weather. Even though it was cold at night, temperatures soon became unbearable in a tent soon after the sun came up. A person going off shift early in the morning could not possibly sleep due to the heat. Such chores as washing clothes and taking showers could not easily be done at night. After several iterations in shift-change times, we finally went with changes at midnight and noon. This allowed cool periods for sleep, daylight hours for washing and personal hygiene, and so

forth.

Shift-change briefings were another crucial aspect of our operations. All action officers were gathered in the briefing tent, both outgoing and incoming, while each staff section officer-in-charge (OIC) briefed what happened during their shift. Liaison officers were also required to give a short update on the status of their respective unit. Only one action officer remained in the various staff section vans while the briefing occurred. Prior to departure of the shift going off-duty, one-on-one sessions were also required. These shift-change briefings occurred at midnight and noon. I asked the Chief of Staff not to attend these meetings and he agreed. I wanted the action officers to share information freely and ask questions if necessary--something they would not do if the Chief of Staff was present. BG Landry would notify me or COL Hawk if there were any special instructions to pass along. Likewise, if I, or COL Hawk, picked up on something that needed to be brought to BG Landry's attention, we would back-brief him.

BG Landry, and LTG Franks, when present, would be briefed at 0700 hours each day. This was a formal briefing using the map, information contained on the wing boards, and any special items of information. We were required to use vu-graphs and an overhead projector in most cases. It seemed that we were constantly making computer-generated vu-graphs. Also during this period, we developed a time-line board depicting days across the top (expressed in G-day terms since we didn't know when we would

attack), the Battlefield Operating systems (BOS) down the left side, and the corresponding actions that had to be accomplished prior to and during the attack. For example, assuming that the attack would be launched at G+1, then LOG BASE ECHO had to be operational NLT G-1, area signal centers had to be in place and operational at G-2, air defense units had to be repositioned at G+3, etc. This system allowed the staff to know exactly what had to be done at what time. It also allowed for some great brainstorming sessions to fill in the gaps.

In order to cut down on the number of orders going out to the MSCs, the G-3 devised the daily FRAG-O. These, numbered consecutively, went out each evening detailing what the Commanding General wanted accomplished. Most of the time the G-3 personally wrote these and since he was located at the TAC CP, the responsibility for writing and dispatching of these orders rested with the TAC. Any unit or staff member wanting to include anything in the daily FRAG-O would pass the request through the G-3 Operations Division at the Main which, in turn, would pass the request to the TAC CP. Units soon came to expect the daily FRAG-O between 2000 and 2200 hours.

Communications steadily improved during this time period before the ground war. We continued having problems in getting the right telephone numbers for our units since they were constantly moving. We also established an open circuit, direct line to the TAC CP. Essentially, it amounted to an INTERCOM-type system that was constantly activated. If we wanted to talk to

the TAC all we had to do was say "TAC, this is the Main" and hopefully they would answer. This open circuit with built-in speaker allowed us (and them) to listen to each others briefings and planning sessions. This worked great as long as one of us didn't hang up the TA 312 attached to it or the switchboard didn't unhook the open circuit. E-mail also continued to improve and was much more reliable than the message center. It was during this time that the operations center received two TACSAT radios. The TAC CP was the net control for these radios--we were just in a monitoring mode. Any attempt to use the radio usually resulted in a "scolding" from the G-3 or the Commanding General.

Very few changes were made to the main CP during the period right before our move to the west in preparation for the ground war. We did obtain a GP large tent that served as a briefing tent (as previously mentioned) since the operations vans were so crowded. For the operations personnel, it meant having to keep another set of charts and maps up to date. This was time consuming since we also had to keep updated maps and charts in the following areas: CG's office van, operations center, Four Horse van, and the alternate CP van. The requirement was to have all maps and charts posted exactly the same and kept up-to-date at all times. One can imagine how many changes occurred each day. We soon learned that all maps, charts, and other informational aids had to be interchangeable throughout the Main.

As the combat power of VII Corps continued to build, our main concern was that Iraqi forces would attack south into Saudi

Arabia. The 1CD was "chopped" to VII Corps in order to provide us with a defensive capability in the Hafir al Batin Wadi area. The 1st Armored Division (UK) was also placed in the wadi area for this reason. These units would also serve to protect the westward move of the VII Corps into its final attack positions. While we were waiting for the westward move to occur, several things happened which I will remember forever.

First, the air war began. The exact date was kept secret until it happened. No one, with the possible exception of General Franks and BG Landry, knew when and if the coalition would attack. Approximately two hours before the commencement of the air campaign, I received a call from our ARCENT LNO and was informed that if I looked out the operations center in a northwest direction in about two hours, I would probably see the sky light up. I finally got a straight answer from him that our aircraft were enroute to targets in Iraq. We were finally at war.

With the air campaign started, the SCUD attacks on Saudi Arabia and Israel began. The first of these attacks caused quite a scare at the Main. Although we could not see or hear the SCUD, we knew that it would be fired generally in our direction. We could pick up the SCUD launches on our scopes and receive flash messages from NORAD and ARCENT. A few minutes later we could determine the direction the missile was fired. By plotting the direction on a map, we could generally determine the intended target. It was also during this time that the corps went into a

MOPP Two status, and began taking our anti-gas pills. The G-2 predicted that Iraqi forces would hit us with an all-out chemical attack. I believe it was a very difficult decision for LTG Franks to order the corps into MOPP suits during this time due to the fact that most soldiers within the corps had only two complete MOPP outfits. Although I learned first-hand why the SCUD was given the name of a terror weapon, it wasn't long before SCUD pools were set up and bets were being made on when one would be fired, at what target, and if the weapon would actually hit the intended target.

The corps also had a J-STARS terminal. As mentioned, we were concerned that Iraq would attack into Saudi Arabia. The J-STARS would pick up any movement of forces across the border. Any large movements were to be reported to the Chief of Staff immediately. There were two reasons for this. First we wanted to know well in advance of any attack across the border and secondly, we wanted to know of any movement of the Republican Guards--especially any westward movement which would indicate that they knew of our plan to attack using the "end around" approach. Several nights J-STARS picked up "large formations" moving in a southerly direction towards the wadi. Other intelligence sources, such as the in-place SOF forces and Mohawk SLAR, failed to pick up these movements and only after aerial photographs were taken and analyzed, did we discover that these movements were actually metal fences blowing in the ever-present wind.

As the anticipated G-Day, projected to be 21 February, grew closer, our planning for the westward movement of the corps became more intense. The TAC CP would control the movement of the corps. Once the units and the TAC CP were in position, the Corps Main would move. We would position ourselves to the northwest of LOG BASE ECHO. We would make the move and be operational within 24 hours. We would now set up the war fighting configuration of the VII Corps Main. Several lessons had been learned in our initial TAA. First and foremost, the Four Horsemen van was inadequate to receive, disseminate, and action all the required reports and planning actions. The Chief of Staff had visited the XVIII Airborne Corps Main CP and the 1st (UK) Main CP and had seen several things he liked. Before the move, he had a meeting with the Main Commandant, the deputy G-3, and me to explain what he wanted.

By 19 February, the Corps Main had set up and was operational (see diagram 5). The big change was that an Operations Center composed of action officers from each of the staff sections were arranged in a large tent. The tent was actually two GP large tents erected side by side and tied together at the flaps so as to create one extremely large tent. The expandable vans were used as offices, message centers, and planning areas. This set up, although subject to the daily wind and rain storms, worked extremely well. All action officers were within visual and voice range and could keep up with the situation and the pace of the battle. It also helped me keep up

with what was happening in each of the staff sections. Whenever an action came up, everyone knew all the details and could adequately work on their portion without having to go from van to van to coordinate, repeat briefings, and explain over and over what was occurring. All action officers were able to hear and see what was going on during the shift-change briefings, the briefings given to the Chief of Staff and Commanding General, and the constant planning sessions that were held around the tactical map board. I cannot expound enough on the success we had in the tent operations center. I would highly recommend this configuration at the corps level for any future operation.

It was during this period of time that I learned exactly how much the G-3 Operations was involved in each of the other staff functional areas. We handled fire support, logistics, personnel, civil actions, engineer, NBC, airspace coordination, etc. We just didn't coordinate with the staff section involved, we actually did the work! If a unit needed fuel, it was the G-3 operations that pushed the G-4 and COSCOM to get it where it was needed. The G-3 operations kept up with the daily battle losses in equipment and personnel, the suspense log, and the supply of refugee aid. The Deputy G-3 and I decided that the G-3 portion of the main was the only staff section the Chief of Staff could count on to accomplish any given task. It appeared to me that the only thing the G-4 briefed daily was the status of the desert BDUs!

As the 24 February G-Day got closer and closer, General

Franks became concerned that ARCENT and CENTCOM were not attacking corps-nominated targets to the north of our units--especially the front-line units and the Republican Guards. Try as we might, none of our targets were being hit. It also became evident that ARCENT had not established a Fire Support Coordination Line (FSCL) which essentially meant that the Corps Commander did not own any ground and air space on either side of the border of Saudi Arabia. Only after repeated calls to ARCENT was one established, it was established at the border! This meant that the corps had to coordinate any fires across the FSCL with ARCENT. These fires included everything from mortars and howitzers, to attack helicopters. As far as we were concerned, this was totally unsatisfactory. The 1CD, the 11th Aviation Brigade, the 1ID, and Corps Artillery were conducting raids and feints in the wadi area designed to keep Iraq's attention focused on the Wadi al Batin. Any fires or effects of these fires likely to occur across the border had to be coordinated with ARCENT instead of the other way around. ARCENT also tried to establish something called a High Altitude Air Defense Zone as a fire control measure which would control all aircraft flights and fires (above 500 feet) occurring from the corps rear boundary to a distance somewhere within Iraq. General Franks finally went to visit the ARCENT and CENTCOM commanders in order to get the targeting and fire control measures straightened out. I was to later learn that he was chewed out by the CINC! In any case, the fire support measures improved--especially after the ground phase

commenced. My only concern was that the location of the FSCL changed too frequently--sometimes several times a day. This made it almost impossible to disseminate the changes to our subordinate units.

We were also lacking in tactical intelligence. ARCENT and CENTCOM were indicating different enemy units at different strengths opposing our front-line units than was the VII Corps G-2. Mohawk aircraft were used extensively in attempts to locate and identify enemy units. We also used the unmanned remotely piloted vehicle (RPV) for intelligence as well as targeting. Most of ARCENT and CENTCOM assets were devoted to locating the Republican Guards and those enemy units east of the wadi. The corps Long Range Surveillance Units (LRSU) were finally deployed across the new westward zone in an attempt to find out what was opposing the corps and to report any movement of the enemy. I remember the Corps Commander being very concerned about the safety of these units. One of the teams became lost and misoriented and used a wrong report format that indicated trouble. After only one and one-half days, all the LRSU teams were recovered and not used again.

Once we had settled into our new position, we began to have problems with aircraft recognition. Each night one or more of our units would report unidentified aircraft in their sector. Most of these sightings were visual. Message after message went out to our units directing that all IFF systems would be used at all times. Many of our brigade commanders requested that they be

allowed to engage the unidentified aircraft. In one instance, an assistant division commander observed one such aircraft that was generally circling his TOC. He personally got on the telephone and requested permission to engage. Our A²C² section also stated that the aircraft did not possess the IFF code or at least did not have it turned on. The ADC assured us that he positively identified the aircraft as "not being one of ours" due to the placement of its running lights. We came to within inches of approving his request only to find out at the last minute that it was one of our RPV aircraft. Another unidentified aircraft turned out to be one of our Mohawk airplanes that had strayed off course. Others turned out to be French helicopters and our own B-52s. One would think, because of the extremely clear nights, that aircraft, actually many thousands of feet in the air, appeared to be much closer than they really were. We knew that Iraq possessed fixed wing, rotary wing, and the ability to fly RPVs, but with no confirmed sightings, I recommended to the CG that he and only he personally approve the use of any air defense weapon to engage aircraft. SCUDS could be easily distinguishable from aircraft so the order would not hamper the engagement of inbound missiles. He agreed and messages went out to that effect. Although we continued to get calls concerning unidentified aircraft, we did not receive calls for engagement.

The week before G-Day was devoted to artillery raids, helicopter raids and feints by the 1CD and the 1ID in the area of the wadi. Artillery units, especially MLRS, would, under the

cover of darkness, get within range of front-line units and their supporting artillery and fire multiple volleys. A Fire-finder radar would be used in conjunction with a non-firing MLRS unit. Once a unit fired, it would quickly move out of the area. The non-firing unit with the associated Q-36/37 radar would remain in position awaiting any counterfire from enemy artillery. Any counterfire picked up by the radars would be immediately fired by the unit in hiding. It wasn't long before absolutely no counterfire would be fired by the Iraqi artillery. The 1CD did numerous feints in which units would move to the 8-10 feet high dirt berm that marked the Saudi border and begin to cut lanes in an attempt to deceive Iraq as to the true location of the attack. Attack helicopter units would hit targets, especially observation towers, located in the vicinity of the berm.

Finally, G-Day commenced with attacks by the Marines in the east, the Saudi/Egyptian Corps in the eastern-center and the XVIII Corps in the west. VII Corps would attack on G+1 or 25 February. The 2ACR did move forward on 24 February to allow the 1st and 3rd Armored Divisions to align themselves on the border for the G+1 attack. The movement of the 2ACR did not meet any resistance. J-STARS and pilot reports indicated that the Republican Guards had not adjusted their defense to meet either the VII Corps or the XVIII Corps. The 1ID also pushed approximately 10 kms north of the berm in its zone. Again, there was no reaction from the Republican Guards or the front-line enemy forces. From all indications, the Marines were moving

swiftly northward, the Saudi/Egyptian Corps were not encountering overwhelming opposition and the XVIII Corps was moving rapidly without any real threat resistance. I remember wondering whether or not I, and my staff, could keep up with all the activity with only two TACSAT radios when I received a call from ARCENT followed by our LNO from CENTCOM wanting to know whether or not VII Corps could attack early based on the successes of the other attacking forces. After several calls to the TAC, updates to the Chief of Staff, and a quick review of the ongoing actions, the Corps Commander made the decision that he could attack with as little as two hours notice. The official time of attack was now 1430 hours, 24 February. It was marvelous to see the corps plan come together in those few hours. The 1ID began its breach operations in earnest and the 2ACR, followed by the 1st and 3rd Armored Divisions began attacking into Iraq. The entire corps came to life--it was awesome!

Life in the operations center became a blur of activity. Reports and requests were coming and going so fast that action officers had to work several actions at the same time. Since the TAC was controlling the battle, we were concerned with operations that was to occur at least 72 hours in advance. Typical of these operations revolved around supporting the forces in contact. Fuel, ammunition, and subsistence items had to begin movement at the earliest possible time in order to be available to the front-line units. For example, as daylight, 25 February arrived, we discovered that a convoy of approximately 90 vehicles loaded

with fuel and ammunition was mired in the sand in the extreme western sector of the corps. The convoy had stopped for a few hours and the heavy vehicles had actually sunk into the sand. It took the remainder of the war to retrieve these vehicles. Meanwhile, COSCOM had to reconstitute this convoy in order to quickly resupply the ACR and the divisions. This problem quickly gave way to the next--the prisoner of war problem.

Although the Marines in the east and the Saudi/Egyptian coalition had been capturing enemy POWs for weeks, the VII Corps with its westward move and its distance from the Saudi border had only captured a few line crossers. With the initiation of the attack, literally thousands of POWs were collected. It took every available vehicle, to include borrowed school buses, to transport the POWs to the corps cages. We were overwhelmed quickly. Units would report to us locations of POWs left in the desert with a few guards and we, in turn, would try to arrange timely pick-up. Several of these holding areas had to be left in place for several days. We could only resupply them with food, water, and clothing (normally expired MOPP suits) until transportation could be arranged. The MPs did a marvelous job, and, in general, understood that American forces had never encountered anything like this before. I had never given much thought about POW operations before this, but made a mental note there and then to plan for this type operation in any future plan that I might be associated with.

Just before midnight on 27 February, I received a call from

our CENTCOM LNO, LTC Bob Hipp, stating that a cease-fire was planned for 0500 hours the following morning (28 February). I knew we had been really successful, but did not expect to end the war so soon. The corps was still in contact with elements of the Republican Guards. I relayed this message to a very tired Chief of Staff (He had not had but a few hours sleep in the last few days). What happened next is still a source of controversy. BG Landry immediately called LTG Franks at the TAC and informed him of the possible cease-fire at 0500 hours (some 5 hours into the future). A series of TACSAT communications began which reported the exact locations of all our units. ARCENT wanted to know our exact front line trace. It was reported to ARCENT that we were short of the Al Jahra Road (Road of Death) and were some 40 to 50 kilometers south of Safwan. ARCENT called back and stated that they thought we had already captured Safwan. We repeated that we had not advanced that far. General Franks got on the TACSAT and talked to the ADC of the 1ID and asked him if he could get to the Safwan crossroads by 0800 hours. The ADC replied that his units were almost out of fuel and it would be tough. General Franks next called an attack helicopter commander (I cannot remember which) and ordered him to attack the Safwan crossroads. The next thing I knew the cease-fire had been changed from 0500 hours to 0800 hours. We were to continue the attack immediately to seize Safwan and destroy as much Iraqi equipment as possible. At no time, that I am aware, did anyone in the corps try to deceive ARCENT or CENTCOM as to the true

location of the corps. ARCENT action officers knew of our exact locations. General Franks did what he could, once it was known that CENTCOM wanted Safwan. At no time, prior to the extension of the cease fire had anyone discussed Safwan as an objective.

The immediate tasks after the cease-fire were to prepare Safwan for the formal cease fire meeting, to destroy as much equipment as possible, locate any by-passed forces, and provide food, water, medical supplies, and care to the thousands of displaced civilians.

In order to prepare Safwan for CINCCENTCOM's cease-fire agreement, the VII Corps Secretary of the General Staff (SGS) took the lead. Headed by Major Dan Nolan, the team gathered tentage, stoves, latrines, etc., and headed towards the airfield at Safwan. Everything had to be "dress right dress" before the start of the conference. Security elements had to be positioned since VII Corps really didn't own Safwan during the initial preparation stages. Only up-to-date equipment would be used and in sufficient strength to show the Iraqi representatives that the United States was serious.

Immediately after the formal signing of the cease fire, our forces began destroying any operational Iraqi equipment within our zone. Engineers did the actual demolition of the equipment. It was during this phase that VII Corps units discovered complete deserted command posts, weapon caches, and additional by-passed enemy units. Helicopters were used extensively for this post-reconnaissance of the battlefield. Any abandoned U.S.

equipment was also located and moved south of the Saudi border. General Franks was very concerned that not one piece of U.S. equipment would be left in our zone. Helicopters constantly flew over our area in order to locate and report U.S. equipment that units either didn't realize they were missing or had not recovered for one reason or the other.

As our units began to redeploy into Saudi Arabia, displaced civilians became a major challenge--especially in the Safwan area. All were hungry and thirsty and many needed medical attention. Initially, the 3rd Armored Division set up and operated a refugee camp near Safwan. VII Corps main continued to push supplies into Safwan to feed the increasing number of displaced civilians. Our other units to the north and west of the 3rd Armored Division also became involved in providing food, water, and medicine to civilians. Such items as baby food and pediatric medicine were in short supply and kept the G-5 quite busy in the contracting business. As more and more civilians occupied the camp near Safwan, reports of atrocities by the Iraqi soldiers and authorities began to surface. It appeared that rebel forces were trying to unseat Saddam Hussein from power. Our role in post-conflict activities were severely tested during this time. Very little guidance from ARCENT, CENTCOM, or the State Department was received. Meanwhile, the corps continued its redeployment to base camps near KKMC in Saudi Arabia.

Once all of our units, minus the Kuwaiti stay-behind force, had crossed into Saudi Arabia, the VII Corps Main complex was

torn down and moved to one of the buildings at KKMC. This would be our last command post before redeployment to Germany. The command post was almost a replica of what we had used in the double-tent during the war except that it was set up in a large atrium of a building. Action officers from the various staff sections were present, although by this time the primary staff officers such as the G-3, G-4, and the Deputy Commanding General, had rejoined us. Our primary functions during this time were to monitor our stay-behind force in Kuwait, monitor the movements of units and equipment to the ports or staging areas, and to clear all of the training areas we had used prior to the outbreak of hostilities.

As previously mentioned, VII Corps underwent extensive live-fire training before the war utilizing ranges established in or near their TAA. These ranges had to be cleared of all unexploded ordnance before we redeployed to Europe. This was a major undertaking since many of our units had failed to keep adequate records of what type of ammunition had been fired on the ranges. There was even talk of erecting a chain link fence around each of the ranges in order to keep the local herdsmen out of the impact areas. Since this was economically unfeasible, we used Engineer units to mark and explode the duds. This effort was still underway whenever I redeployed to Europe.

My stay in Saudi Arabia ended on 17 April 1991, upon boarding a plane at the KKMC airfield enroute to Stuttgart Germany. I was somewhat uncomfortable about this since reports

were being received about servicemen attempting to smuggle out unexploded souvenir items in their luggage. The night before we boarded the flight was spent undergoing several "shakedown" inspections in an attempt to locate any contraband. To top off my entire stay in Saudi Arabia, I was presented my set of Desert BDUs and boots, as promised the previous December by the Corps Commander, as I boarded the airplane.

Throughout this Personal Experience Monograph, I have attempted to briefly describe the different configurations of the Main command posts that VII Corps utilized during the preparation, deployment, and the actual conduct of operations during Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm. In accomplishing this, I have shared some of my frustrations and some of the lessons learned. Within this monograph, I attempted to explain only those actions in which I was personally involved. I tried to stay away from rumor or from second-hand information. I hope in writing this monograph that I did not distract from the successes enjoyed by VII Corps. I will always believe that the corps did an outstanding job; starting from the unlikely prospect that it would ever deploy anywhere, to the fact that it participated in the largest deployment in history; that it took on one of the largest armies in existence as the main attack for CENTCOM and soundly defeated the best that our adversary had to offer.

DIAGRAM 1
VII CORPS CRISIS ACTION TEAM
KELLEY BARRACKS, STUTTGART, GERMANY

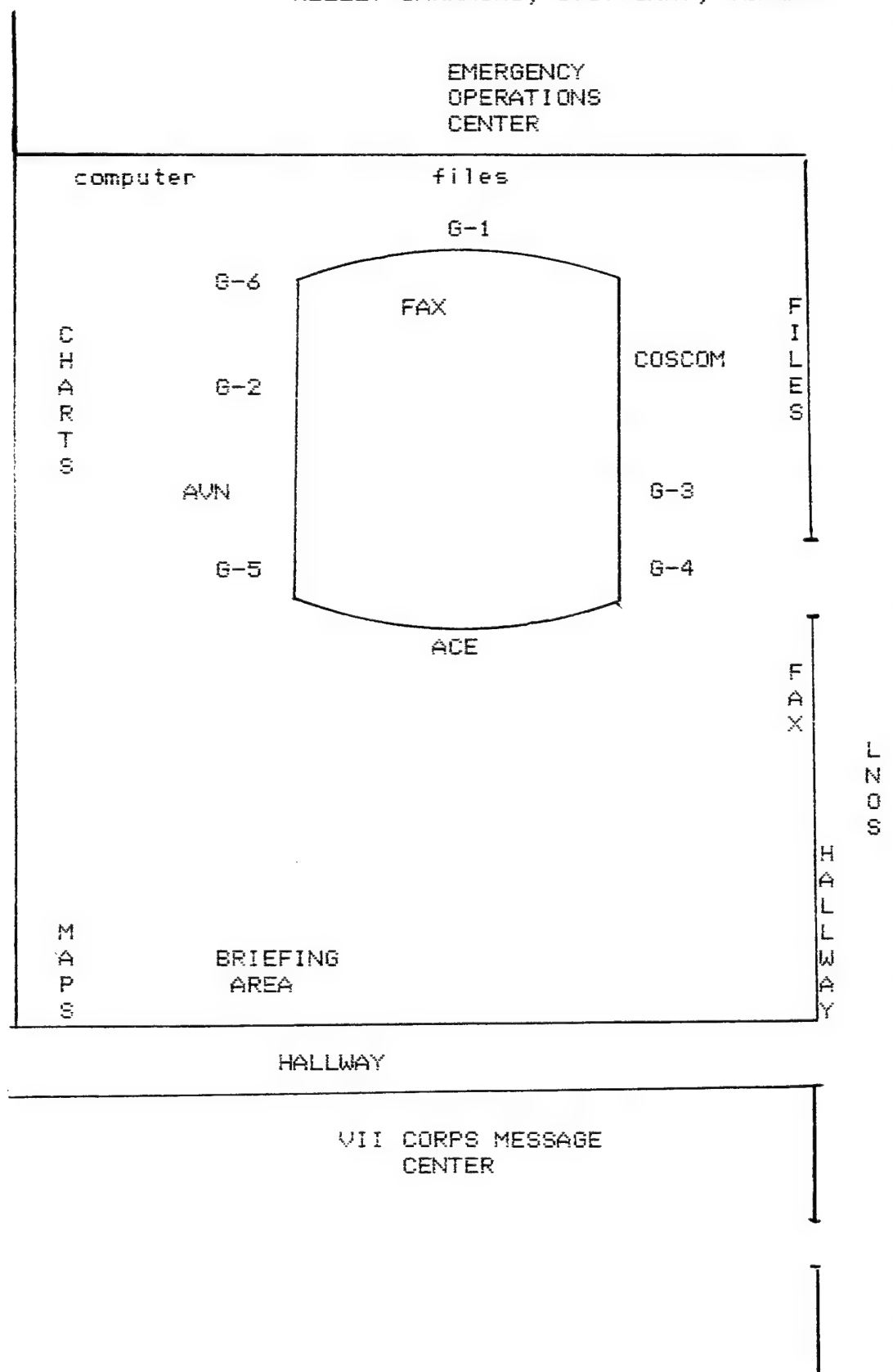


DIAGRAM 2
VII CORPS MINI-MAIN

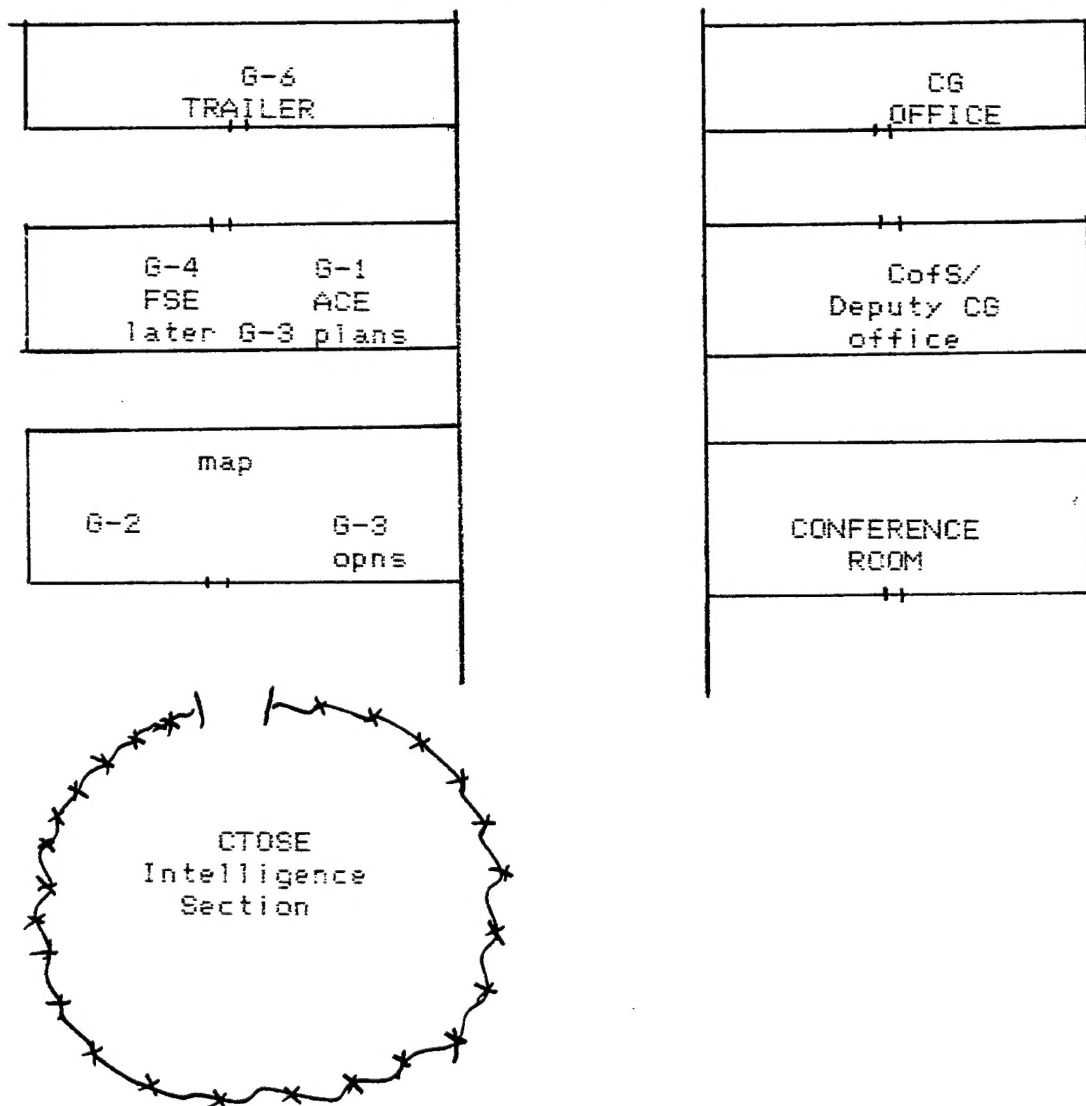


DIAGRAM 3
VII CORPS MAIN CP AREA (TAA)

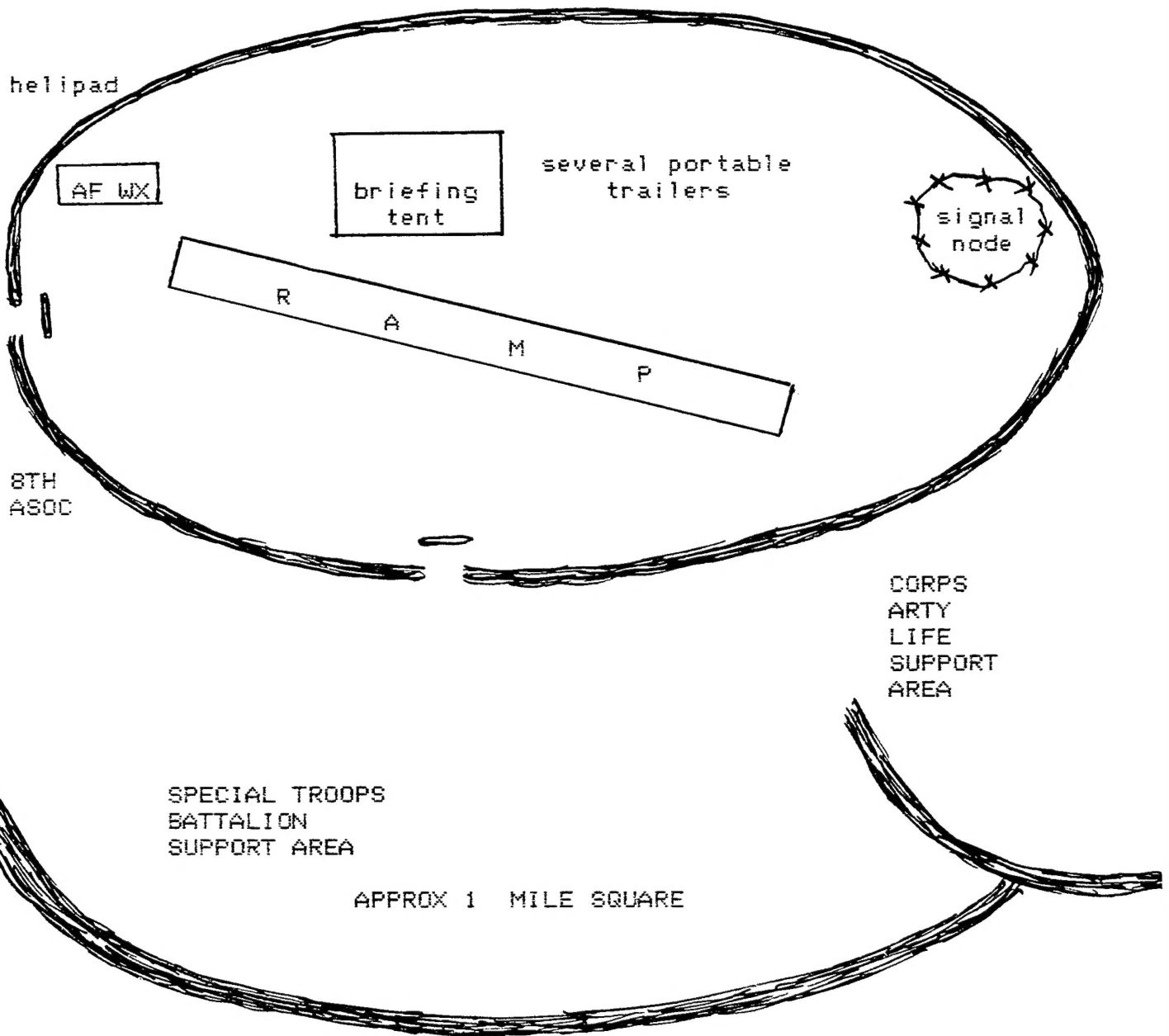


DIAGRAM 4
VII CORPS MAIN (TAA)

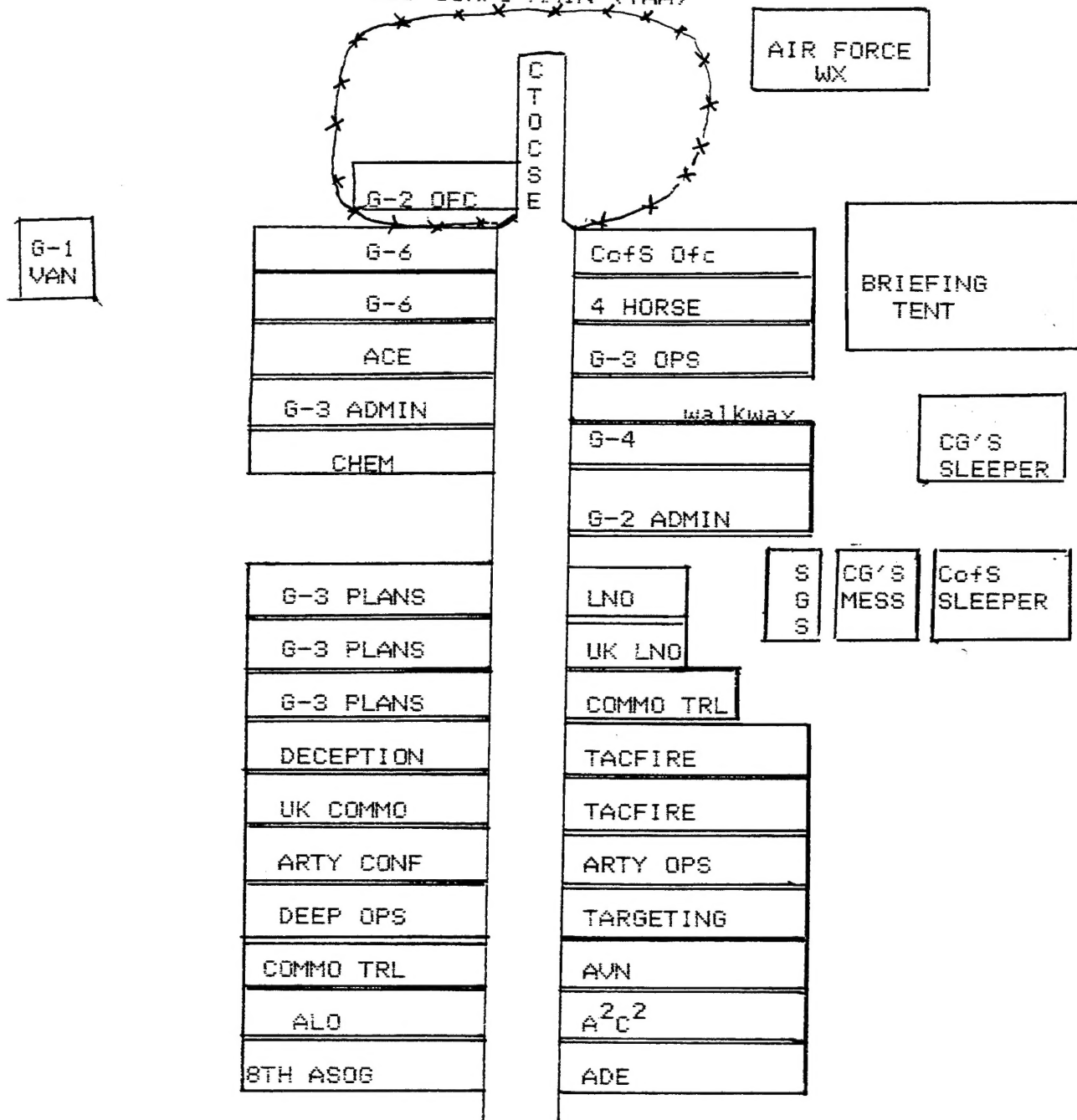


DIAGRAM 5
VII CORPS MAIN DURING OPERATION DESERT STORM

